



# NEWS RELEASE

## OFFICE OF THE STATE'S ATTORNEY FOR HOWARD COUNTY

**For Immediate Release:**

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### **Former Gaithersburg Man Sentenced to Life Without Parole in Laurel Double Shooting**

A former Gaithersburg man, convicted in the 2016 double shooting at a North Laurel motel, where one of the victims died, has been sentenced to life without the possibility of parole. Kenneth Frizzell Diggs, Jr., 49, of no fixed address, was sentenced in Howard County Circuit Court this morning for the first-degree murder of Amanda Diane Duer, 29, of LaPlata, and the attempted first-degree murder of Derik DeAnthony Henderson, 34, of Laurel.

Police were called to the Turf Motel on July 2, 2016 for a report that two victims had been shot. Duer, was transported to Laurel Regional Hospital and was pronounced dead of a single gunshot to the chest. Henderson was shot in the upper leg and was transported to University of Maryland Shock Trauma Center with non-life-threatening injuries. He testified during the trial as did a second woman in the motel room who was not injured. After a five-day trial last June, the jury found Diggs guilty of the first-degree murder of Duer, the attempted first-degree murder of Henderson and three firearms counts, among other charges.

At this morning's sentencing, Diggs professed his innocence. Duer's mother and sister presented family photos and presented victim impact statements, acknowledging her hardscrabble life of drug abuse, but telling the judge that she wanted to make changes in her life. "She was ready to get help and get back with her children," said her mother.

Assistant State's Attorney Tricia Cecil spotlighted Diggs' criminal record that includes three crimes of violence—one of which is a 2004 conviction for second-degree murder in Anne Arundel County. "The state cannot think of a more egregious way to violate your probation for murder than to commit another murder," stated Cecil.

Judge Timothy J. McCrone agreed, characterizing Diggs' criminal record as "extreme." He sentenced Diggs to life without parole for Duer's murder, a consecutive life sentence for the attempted murder of Henderson and consecutive sentences of 25, 20 & 15 years in prison on the firearms charges.

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